

KINSHIP

The cross-cousin relationship is the foundation of the kinship system of Lau, and differs in no respect from that usually described as the Fijian system, but which is really that of Mbau and Lomaitivi. If a man is related in any way to another man, he will be related in exactly the same way to that other man's brother, but not to his sister. If he is related in any way to a woman he is related in the same way to that woman's sister, but not to her brother. The Lauan kinship terms are here given:

Kainga. Relation. The Tongan word is *kainga*; the Fijian *veivakani* is also used, but it also means brother and sister. A frequent term is *veikilai*, acquainted, for to know a man and to be related to a man are the same.

Tama. Father. Includes the father's brother, the father's father's brother's son, and so on. Other fathers than the true father are distinguished as little fathers. The term "big father" is not used.

Tina. Mother; also mother's sister, mother's mother's sister's daughter, following the female line. Mothers other than the true mother are called "little mother." The term "big mother" is unknown. A term of address to a mother is *nau*; it is also used as a proper name with the article *ko*; *na tinanggu*, my mother, but *ko nau*, mother.

Luve. Child. The converse of *tama* and *tina*. To designate a brother's child *luve ni talinggu* is used.

Tuaka. Elder brother of a male, or elder sister of a female; also sometimes used by a man to designate his elder sister; used by the son of a younger brother to designate the son, whether older or younger, of an elder brother.

Tathi. The converse of *tuaka*; a man's younger brother or a woman's younger sister. If not own brothers or sisters *tathi* is applied to the descendant of the younger brother or sister. The term "my little *tathi*" was once used by a woman to designate the descendant of a younger brother. The term *tathi* is sometimes used in speaking of the opposite sex.

Weka. Relatives in general, but more particularly a man's sister, or a woman's brother.

Tuka. Grandfather, and any male ancestor. A great grandfather is *tukangu vakarus* (my grandfather twice).

Tumbu. Grandmother and any female ancestor.

Makumbu. Grandchild is the converse of *tuka* and *tumbu*. Proper terms for generations below grandchildren, *vuarambe* for great-grandchildren, and *tim-bathotho* for great-great-grandchildren rarely used. In conversation people speak of their grandchildren twice, or thrice.

Vungu. The mother's brother and his wife; the father's sister and her husband, wife or husband's father or mother; nephew. It is its own converse and is therefore used by a man to designate his sister's children; by a woman, her brother's children, and so on. A term of address for the mother's brother is *momo*.

Tavale. Father's sister's child, mother's brother's child, if the persons related are of the same sex; wife's brother, and husband's sister.

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587 which consisted of only a feast, no gifts, because it was a marriage of "old people," that is married before, not of "young ones."

595 In heathen times every nobleman had several wives; some small men who were energetic had two wives. A man would frequently marry two sisters. "If," says Melaia, "I live with a nobleman, Makareta, Repeka, or some other will come to be the drawer of water (*i thalo ni wai*). The reason is that they are sisters." If the wife died it was sometimes the custom to bring her sister to take her place.

342 A small feast called *su* (soup) is made by the wife's people when the
574 house of a married couple is built. Thus for one couple it was done three times: when the house was first built; when the reed wall was replaced by a wooden one; when the thatch was replaced by corrugated iron. The wife's people also make *su* when both return from a journey abroad. One such feast consisted of yams, pudding, and fish. The feast is omitted if either goes abroad alone.

574 If no *su* is made it is evident the wife has no kinsfolk; so the wife's
502 people make *su* often lest in a quarrel between her and her husband, he reproach her saying, "Go away; you have no kinsfolk; no *su* has been made on your behalf."

597 Ndranivia, the High Chief, gave his wife Yalekula to a nobleman of
611 Matailakemba when she was pregnant; the child was brought up in Matailakemba, but eventually went back to Naivi, his father's clan, and Narewandamu, his mother's.

684 Adultery and divorce are common. In the old days if a man committed adultery with a nobleman's wife he would sue for pardon. If a lowborn man were married to a nobleman's relative and she committed adultery, the lowborn man would complain to the nobleman, who had the adulterer clubbed unless he sued for pardon. If a man committed adultery, say, with a Waitambu man's wife, the husband would appeal to Tui Waitambu, or better still, to Tui Wathiwathi, who would club the guilty man. If a nobleman committed adultery he was exposed to revenge.

584 "Few high chiefs," says a nobleman, "were not killed. If one was kind
643 to the people of the land he was not clubbed." Some were killed because they entered houses and took other people's wives. That is why our forefathers of Naivi were killed because they were handsome and fond of women." The two reasons why a chief was killed, according to one were "adultery and eating badly," that is eating the feasts brought without sharing them with the people.

593 It is not uncommon for wives to run away to their own people. If a woman marries into another clan, then runs away to her own clan, the hus-

582 Marriage between the subclans within a clan are found in the pedigrees.
618 Of the total number of marriages recorded for any one clan, however, the number of such clan endogamous marriages is usually less than 25 percent. It is possible that in the past no clan endogamous marriages occurred, but some marriages, as recorded in the pedigrees, appear to be endogamous because of the recent fusion of two clans.

582 A study of island inbreeding based on clan pedigrees shows a positive correlation between inbreeding and infertility of the soil. The study shows that 134 the highest percentage of intra-island marriages occurs on Fulanga, next highest on Ongea, then Kambara, Mothe, and Namuka. On the infertile southern islands, a lower percentage of individuals marry spouses from other islands than on the more fertile northern ones.

DESCENT AND RESIDENCE

591 Patrilocal residence and patrilineal descent are the rule in Lau, but there are exceptions. A man may establish residence and affiliation with his wife's clan, for example, to prevent the extinction of a clan when the only living members are female. On Ongea the last surviving member of the Nggalileka clan, a woman, married Vesa of the Mata clan. Vesa and his family occupy the only house on the Nggalileka village land and control the clan's garden land. His children belong to Nggalileka, his wife's clan, but Vesa still belongs theoretically to Mata although he functions as the headman of Nggalileka.

Matrilocal residence and frequently matrilineal descent are used also to improve a man's economic status. Occasionally a man moves in with his wife's clan when it offers the young couple richer garden land than could be obtained from his own clan. For instance, Kolinio, a younger brother in the Vuanitavola clan, Tokalau, married Thiri of the Nakaka clan, Lomatchi. The Nakaka clan has a relatively large amount of the best garden land on Kambara, and the clan is rather small. Kolinio moved to Lomatchi where he used the garden lands of his wife's clan. Kolinio's children who are still young are considered members of the Vuanitavola clan in Tokalau, although in Lomatchi they function in the clan of their mother. Matrilocal residence is more common [134] on fertile than on infertile islands, for there is a tendency for married couples who come from two different islands to establish residence on the more fertile island of the two.

Descent is in general correlated with residence. A man belongs to his father's clan unless his father has established his residence with and becomes a functional part of the clan of the man's mother. In this case the man usually functions with the clan of his mother until his marriage. Thereafter, if he returns with his wife to his father's clan and uses the clan lands, he and his children are considered members of his father's clan. If, on the other hand, he takes his wife to live with the clan of his mother he and his children are

Thompson—Southern Lau : an Ethnography

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usually considered members of his mother's clan. As a rule a woman belongs to the clan of her father although after marriage she lives and functions with her husband's clan.

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ADOPTION

Widows (*ndauai*), orphans (*luve ni yalo*, literally child of the ghost), and illegitimate children (*luve ni sala*, literally child of the path) are transferred from one clan to another by means of the adoption (*lakovi*) ceremony, a form of affinal exchange.

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A widow usually returns to her own people. When her husband dies, her brother or a ranking member of her clan presents a whale's tooth or other property, by means of the usual presentation ceremony, to the clan of her husband with the request that the woman be allowed to return to her clan. This is called *lakovi*. If the property is accepted the widow is free to return. She usually takes at least some of her children with her. These children must also be formally transferred from the clan of their father to that of their mother, by means of the adoption ceremony. If both of a child's parents die, his mother's clan may adopt the child. Frequently, however, the father's clan retains the boys. A child adopted into his mother's clan still belongs theoretically to his father's clan, although he functions with that of his mother, for the adoption ceremony does not affect a man's clan membership, which is fixed by the rule of descent. It marks the transfer of an individual from one clan to another, and the clan losing a member is compensated for its loss by gifts of property from the clan receiving a member.

ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN

Children born out of wedlock are numerous in Lau. According to the natives, illegitimate children formerly had a definite status in the community and were not considered undesirable. They were usually reared in the clan of their mother under the guardianship of the maternal grandfather. Although theoretically they belonged to the clan of their father, they had to be formally adopted into it by means of the adoption ceremony in order to become active members. A child then enjoyed all the rights of full membership in his father's clan. He inherited a share in the clan lands, as did the legitimate sons, and exercised the rights of a *vasu* to his mother's people.

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Since the coming of the missionaries, the attitude toward illegitimate children has changed. A child born out of wedlock is not allowed to be baptized in the mission church. He may be baptized, however, in the house where the mother lives. An unmarried, pregnant woman becomes the subject of village gossip, and members of the community who have been strongly influenced in their behavior patterns by the mission show their disapproval by ignoring the birth feast, to which the whole village is invited. An illegitimate child is still considered a member of his father's clan, but today he is not accepted to full membership in the clan and is not allowed to inherit clan land.

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174 these defenses may be seen today. Their main weapons were bows, clubs, and spears. In the course of time they spread in the Lau group and established themselves on the islands of Lakemba, Naiau, and Mothe, as well as on Kambara.

There was a great deal of rivalry between the leaders of the upper class on the various islands. The influence of Kambara spread until the island held Namuka, Wangava (which was then inhabited), and Komo in tributary relationship, and also included Marambo and Tavunasithi among its possessions. Lakemba, the large fertile island in central Lau, also gained power. Finally, with the help of the Tongans who came to Lau from their homeland 400 miles eastward to build hardwood canoes, Lakemba held all the Lau islands south of Thithia in tributary relationship.

As the power of the chiefs expanded, their sacredness increased. Court etiquette and insignia became formalized and a court phraseology, still used today, developed. The person of the high chief was protected by strict tabus, and death was the penalty for infringement. Social ceremonial became more elaborate, and human sacrifice and cannibalism increased.

Social prestige, based not only on rank but also on personality, became the ultimate value. Rank by birth gave a man standing in society and defined his relations to others, but his success in life depended ultimately on personality. Even a high title, such as the headman of an important clan, did not descend automatically according to the Luan rule of succession,¹¹ but was given to the man selected by the clan elders as qualifying not only on the basis of rank but also on the basis of personality.

There were two main channels for acquiring prestige. The first and by far the most important was success in the gruesome petty wars which ravaged the group. A war hero received immediate popular acclaim. He received a high

● [611] ¹¹ In Lau a title descends from the first son to his brothers in order of seniority throughout the generation and thence to the first son of the first son. This system is called Polynesian primogeniture.